

# **POLICY / COMMUNITY AFFAIRS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING**

**APRIL 5, 2010**

**Oliver Administration Building**

## **Present**

**Subcommittee: Diana Campbell, Chair, Denise Arsenault and John Bento**

**School Committee and Administration: Melinda Thies, Mario Andrade, Don Rebello and Guy Murgio**

**Guests: Ann Marie Roy and Maria Ursini**

**Diana Campbell called the meeting to order at 6:41 PM.**

## **Pledge of Allegiance**

**All present were invited to join in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.**

## **Approval of Minutes**

**MOTION: Denise Arsenault motioned to approve the minutes to the March 1, 2010 meeting; John Bento seconded. The motion to approve passed by a vote of 3 to 0.**

**Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Drug Policy for Students (JFCH)**

**As discussed at the last meeting, the disciplinary action for a first offense should read “suspended out of school for up to ten (10) school days . . .” For suspect students, Administration will confer with the school nurse who makes a determination of the student’s medical condition, then the Administrator will make a determination of disciplinary action and/ or a call for rescue personnel. The language of the policy will be revised to clarify this procedure.**

**MOTION: John Bento motioned to continue this discussion at the next Subcommittee meeting. Denise Arsenault seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **Chemical Health Policy**

**In previous discussions this Committee decided a generic umbrella statement was appropriate for a School Committee policy and the fine points and details belong in the school handbooks. Denise feels the concerns for substance abuse needs to be addressed at all levels. Denise drafted a School Committee policy for consideration.**

**Denise believes more professional development is necessary and the punitive approach is not the way to change inappropriate student behavior; she would like to see positive behaviors rewarded and a yearly review of each school’s initiatives as well as the formation of a task force consisting of teachers, substance abuse counselors, community members, parents and students. Diana and Ann Marie Roy said the Substance Abuse Task Force has diverse membership**

with many school district people. Diana asked Denise to write up her proposal to be disseminated to the Subcommittee.

The School Committee will have an opportunity review the handbook piece when they approve the handbook; Diana requested more lead time to review the handbook before printing. An appropriate time for a presentation on the handbook is at the next School Committee Workshop. Diana acknowledged the work that went into the policy by Don, Guy, Ann Marie and Maria but it was agreed that it should be reviewed by Andrew Henneous to assure enforceability and legal compliance.

Denise is strongly opposed to a policy that presumes any type of responsibility for students when they are not on school property or at a school function. Diana does not agree; we have to send the message this behavior is not tolerated.

Guy said the Mt. Hope SIT Team was in significant support of the policy. Of concern was removing a student from their supportive organization and club activities for 15 days for the first offense; also, the penalty for cyber images was removed and replaced with the encouragement to remove themselves from those situations. Melinda had concerns with the sentence "Since it may not be possible to establish a timeframe for this violation or determine where it took place, the violator shall nevertheless be held accountable" and would like Andrew to review it.

At this point, Don felt to continue this give-and-take process would dilute the effectiveness of the policy and he suggested that Andrew review it. It was understood that the Committee's differing opinions on the policy are philosophical. It was agreed that Guy's draft for the handbook and Denise's draft for the School Committee policy should be reviewed by Andrew for legality and enforceability and the School Committee policy would be discussed again at the next Subcommittee meeting. Denise will write up her proposed draft to be disseminated to all before the next meeting.

**MOTION:** Denise Arsenault motioned to continue this discussion at the May Subcommittee meeting. John Bento seconded. The motion passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

**HIV/ Sexuality**

**AC Nondiscrimination**

**GBA Equal Opportunity Employment**

**JB Educational Opportunities**

Mario reviewed all our policies related to adults and students for compliance with RIDE updates on sexual orientation discrimination and all are in compliance and have been for some time. Melinda suggested the applicable RI General Law be cited in the policy.

## **Basic Education Plan**

**Melinda has posted a link to the BEP on the Bristol Warren website. It was decided that because the BEP was mentioned at the Joint Finance meeting, a hard copy should be available at all the locations the School Committee Policy Book is kept.**

## **Transportation Policies**

**Mario presented draft revisions of three policies:**

### **EEAC-R School Bus Safety Program**

**MOTION: Denise Arsenault motioned to forward the revision of policy/regulation EEAC-R to the full Committee for approval. John Bento seconded. Since the District does not have a director of safety, it was decided to strike “director of safety, and manager of business affairs” and insert “and the Superintendent or his/her designee”. John asked if we had a staff member who is familiar with the vehicle mechanics and questioned if George Simmons was qualified. Melinda feels George has the capacity to do this.**

**MOTION: Denise motioned to amend the draft as mentioned above; John seconded. The motion to approve as amended passed by a vote of 3 to 0.**

### **JFCC-R Student Conduct on School Buses**

**MOTION: Denise motioned to forward the revision of policy/regulation JFCC-R to the full Committee for approval. John seconded. Diana requested a parent conference with the second**

**offense.**

**MOTION:** Denise motioned to amend the recommendation as noted above; John seconded. The motion to approve as amended passed by a vote of 3 to 0.

**Don, Guy, Ann Marie Roy and Maria Ursini left the meeting at 7:45 PM.**

### **JHFD Student Automobile Use**

Diana asked for “Parking privileges will be withdrawn . .” be changed to “privileges may be withdrawn . .”; and strike the last sentence. Denise had concerns about mentioning certain traffic violations but not all traffic violations, so it was decided to strike the phrase “especially with respect to the speed limit on school grounds and compliance of wearing seatbelts.” The Committee discussed the role of the Student Resource Officer and all agreed that Don should be asked to encourage the SRO to proactively remind students to use their seatbelts, obey the speed limit, etc. Administration will confirm this policy is included in the high school handbook.

**MOTION:** Denise motioned to forward the proposed revision as amended above to the full Committee for a first reading. John seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Denise asked if there is a law concerning bus idling; recently a bus for a visiting sports team was parked across several parking spaces in the faculty lot with the motor running; this should be taken up the our Athletic Director to address with the visiting team.

**John commented about the Chemical Health Policy discussion saying he would like to see good examples of professional development and a reward system that Denise mentioned. Melinda said those pieces can only enhance our framework of reference.**

### **Policy Review List**

**Chemical Health Policy: Discussion continued to May meeting**

**Superintendent's Continuous Improvement Plan: John Bento to work with SC Chair to set up special workshop**

**HIV/ Sexuality: Reviewed by Mario Andrade; compliance with RIDE regulations on sexual orientation discrimination was confirmed; General Law reference to be cited on policies**

**TAOD Policy: Discussion continued to May meeting**

**Evaluation Instrument Review: Melinda will do internal revisions first; there has been considerable movement on the state level for alignment of evaluation with student achieve**

**Transportation Policies: Revisions made to three; Mario continues to review the remainder**

**BEP: Posted on our website; hard copies at all locations where Policy Book is kept**

### **Next Meeting**

**May 3, 2010; 6:30 PM**

## **Adjournment**

**MOTION: At 8:05 PM John Bento motioned to adjourn; Denise Arsenault seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

**/ca**